

**From:** Vauter, Ben [Vauter.Ben@epa.gov]  
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**To:** OITA-EVERYONE [OITAEVERYONE@epa.gov]  
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**OFFICE OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND POLICY**

**April 25 - May 1, 2019**



**NSC Meeting on International Marine Litter Activities**

NSC convened a policy coordination committee meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup> to review recent and upcoming international meetings that include marine litter agenda items. The State Department discussed resolutions on *Marine Litter and Microplastics* and *Addressing Single Use Plastics* adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-4) in Nairobi, Kenya held March 4-15, 2019. A robust interagency discussion took place on the strategy with respect to the proposed plastics amendment to the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and EPA gave a readout on the discussions at the recent G20 Environment Senior Officials Meeting on the Marine Plastic Litter Implementation Framework and the marine litter section of the Environment Ministers communique. The meeting concluded with a brainstorming session on other fora where marine litter may be usefully advanced. [Nishida, Finman]

**Environmental Trade Working Group**

EPA participated in an Environmental Trade Working Group meeting along with representatives from Department of Commerce, USTDA, Export Import Bank, and Millennium Challenge Corporation. The ETWG is an interagency working group chaired by Commerce and EPA which aims to facilitate coordination between key agencies involved in promoting exports of US environmental technologies. Commerce discussed recent initiatives regarding the re-chartering of the Environmental Technologies Trade Advisory Committee (ETTAC) and updates to the exporter's portal on the Department's website. Other agencies shared recent initiatives and priorities with the group. [Harrington]

**Select USA Coordination Meeting**

EPA attended an interagency meeting convened by the International Trade Administration (ITA) to discuss the upcoming SelectUSA Summit as well as broader priorities under the SelectUSA program. SelectUSA is the branch of ITA that specializes in promoting foreign direct investment into the United States. Every year, SelectUSA hosts a summit in the DC area to convene local, state, and federal government officials as well as potential foreign investors in the United States. EPA has participated in the Summit in recent years. SelectUSA representatives discussed priorities and expectations for the upcoming event, at which it is hoped that thousands of potential investors will have the opportunity to interact with representatives of the US government and assist them in their efforts to invest in the United States. [Harrington]

**Meeting with UN Environment Global Lead Paint Project Team**

EPA attended a meeting hosted by UN Environment to develop coordination mechanisms to implement the UNEP GEF Lead Paint Project. The project aims to work with at least 40 countries in the target regions to establish lead paint laws by 2020; effective communication and coordination will be essential to meet this goal. To ensure this, UN Environment

has established a Global Team, which includes UN Environment, the World Health Organization, EPA, IPEN (a global environmental NGO), the International Paint and Printing Ink Council (a global paint association) and the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI), that oversees the implementation of the Project activities by Regional Teams in each of the four target regions: Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Central and Eastern Europe. The Regional Teams include regional representatives from WHO, UN Environment, IPEN, ABA-ROLI, and EPA staff. The Global Team agreed on processes to facilitate information exchange and coordination with the Regional Teams and to compile and address requests for support by governments seeking advice on establishing lead paint laws. [Smith, Bandemehr]

#### **Interagency Meeting for Our Ocean Conference 2019**

OITA attended a meeting at the State Department that kicked off the U.S. Government's efforts this year for the upcoming Our Ocean Conference 2019, to be hosted by Norway in Oslo on October 23-24. Norway's Our Ocean Conference is expected to follow the same format as previous Our Ocean Conferences where countries and organizations offer up big new financial commitments that are action-oriented towards protecting the marine environment. The four themes of the Our Ocean Conference will continue: sustainable fisheries, marine pollution, climate related impacts on the ocean, and marine protected areas. State Department is looking to U.S. federal agencies and departments to make new commitments to announce in Oslo during the conference. Palau is expected to host the Our Ocean Conference in 2020. [Adrian, Horan]

#### **Meeting with Peruvian Foreign Ministry on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Cooperation**

OITA participated in a meeting between the Peruvian Embassy and the USG Interagency workgroup for ASGM, which consists of EPA, USAID, the State Department, the Department of Labor and the US Geological Survey. The meeting was convened to discuss ongoing and planned activities to implement the USG-Peru MOU on ASGM which was signed in 2017. The Peruvian Foreign Ministry shared updates regarding the start of a multi-year effort, called *Operation Mercury*, which aims to eliminate illegal gold mining in the Peruvian Amazon. Peru's General Directorate for Mining Formalization at the Ministry of Energy and Mines specified six areas where they would like increased US support, including development of gold and mercury traceability systems; development and promotion of alternative technologies to eliminate the use of mercury in ASGM; connecting US markets for responsible gold to formal/legal ASGM operations in Peru; policy support for ASGM formalization/legalization; and technical assistance from US mining experts. [Vauter]

#### **OITA HIGHLIGHTS AIR QUALITY AWARENESS WEEK IN SOCIAL MEDIA**

OITA is activity taking part in a global conversation taking place for this week's Air Quality Awareness Week (<https://www.airnow.gov/airaware>). This campaign, led by EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, has included twitter posts from a wide range of government agencies, embassies and consulates, state and local environment departments, and other organizations. OITA has prepared five tweets, approved by the Office of Public Affairs, which will go out during the campaign and be retweeted by other EPA offices on Friday, when the theme is "Air Quality Around the World." OITA's tweets include mention of our work in partnership with the World Health Organization, a new report from the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, efforts to improve air quality in six Latin American countries, the activities of EPA Embassy Science Fellow Kelly Witter in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and our Green Ports and Vessels Initiative in collaboration with China. The three tweets which have been sent so far can be viewed at the following links:

- <https://twitter.com/EPAallnations/status/1122860622331379712>
- <https://twitter.com/EPAallnations/status/1123228509403529216>
- <https://twitter.com/EPAallnations/status/1123584165302218758>

[Marzouk, Doroski, Chen, Gonzalez, Buckley, Guen-Murray, Besch, Bandemehr, Hill-Macon, Sims, Muehling, Hong, Dieu, Landis]

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- May 7-8: CAFTA-DR Marine Litter Workshop